



Network News

VA Heart of Texas Health Care Network March 2009

Gulf War Advisory Committee Visit Cancelled: The Gulf War Advisory Committee visit on March 18 -19 at Temple has been cancelled.

Valley Inpatient and Emergency Services Contracts Awarded: On March 5, inpatient and emergency services contracts were awarded for the Texas Valley Sector. A contract was awarded to Valley Baptist Health Care System, which will provide the contracted care at its two medical center locations in Harlingen and Brownsville, Texas. A second contract was awarded to South Texas Health System, where Veterans will be able to access inpatient and emergency services at McAllen Medical Center and Edinburg Regional Medical Center. Services provided under the contracts will include acute medical, surgical, and mental health care in an inpatient setting, as well as emergency services.

All Veterans enrolled in the VA health care system will be eligible for care under these contracts. It is anticipated that services will be available at each of these locations within 30 – 45 days.

Timothy P. Shea, Network Director, and **Jeff Milligan**, Acting Director, South Texas Veterans Health Care System, will host Briefings in McAllen, Harlingen and Brownsville on **March 9**. Briefings will include the Valley health care expansions including inpatient and emergency services, and the rural mobile health clinic.

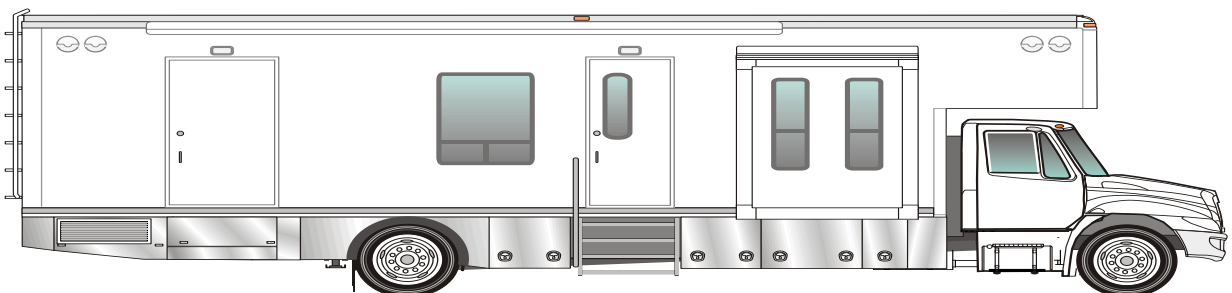
8:30 – 9:30 am **Homewood Suites by Hilton**
3801 Expressway 83, McAllen

10:45 – 11:45 am **UT Regional Academic Health Center Auditorium**
2102 Treasure Hills Blvd., Harlingen

2:00 – 3:00 pm **Marriott Courtyard**
3955 N. Expressway 77/83, Brownsville

Rural Mobile Health Clinic contract awarded: In a continuing effort to provide health care to Veterans in rural areas, a contract was awarded to LifeLine Mobile and they will deliver the vehicle to the VA in approximately 180 days.

The mobile clinic will provide primary care, mental health care, immunizations, and education services to Veterans in Rio Grande City (Starr County); Roma (Starr County); Zapata (Zapata County); Falfurrias (Brooks County); Hebbronville (Jim Hogg County); and Port Isabel (Cameron County). The mobile clinic will be based out of Laredo and McAllen and will visit the designated cities every other week. A satellite unit will be installed on the vehicle for use in emergency preparedness and disasters.



Groundbreaking Ceremony: The Groundbreaking for the VA Texas Valley Coastal Bend Health Care System's Ambulatory Surgery and Specialty Outpatient Center at Harlingen is **April 6 at 9:45 am**. **Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison** and **Congressman Henry Cuellar** will provide remarks and invitations will be sent soon.

In collaboration with the University of Texas Regional Academic Health Center, VA will use the new facility to provide a full range of expanded services, including specialty and diagnostic services such as pharmacy, digital X-rays, CT scans, MRIs and other services. Physicians at the center will perform outpatient surgeries, including cataract removals, diagnostic colonoscopies and prostate biopsies. VA also plans to expand the services it provides at its health care facilities in Corpus Christi, Laredo and McAllen.



www.publichealth.va.gov/PUBLICHEALTH/womenshealth/index.asp

Women's History Month: March is a month that honors the achievements and contributions of American women. Visit USA.gov's link to WomensHistoryMonth.gov to read about major historical figures and see event highlights.

Polytrauma Rehabilitation Center: Marmon Mok Architecture, in a joint venture with SmithGroup, is designing the new Polytrauma Rehabilitation Center (PRC) on the campus of the Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans Hospital in San Antonio.

The 84,000-square-foot building will serve veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan who have suffered multiple traumatic injuries. The PRC is one of five VA polytrauma centers in the U.S. The project includes renovation of 32,000 square feet of the existing hospital. Groundbreaking is expected in late 2009, and is scheduled to be completed in 2012.



Artist rendering of the PRC

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